

"THE CHRONICLE & DIRECTORY" FOR 1874.

NOW READY.

THIS Work now in the TWELFTH year of its existence, is ready for delivery.

It has been compiled and printed at the Daily Press Office, as usual, from the best and most authentic sources, and no pains have been spared to make the work complete in all respects.

In addition to the usual varied and voluminous information, the value of the "CHRONICLE AND DIRECTORY FOR 1874" has been further augmented by a CHROMO-LITHOGRAPH.

PLAN OF THE CITY OF CANTON, AND FOREIGN SETTLEMENTS OF SHANGHAI.

A Chromo-Lithograph Plate of the NEW CODE OF SIGNALS IN USE AT THE PRAK.

THE VARIOUS HOUSE FLAGS

(Designed expressly for this Work.)

MAPS OF HONGKONG, JAPAN, AND OF THE COAST OF CHINA.

ALSO, THE NEW CODE OF CIVIL PROCEDURE.

HONGKONG.

besides other local information and statistics corrected to date of publication, tending to make this work in every way suitable for Public, Mercantile, and General Offices.

The Directory is published in Two Forms, Complete at \$5; or with the Lists of Residents, Port Directors, Maps, &c., at \$3.

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The Daily Press.

HONGKONG, FEBRUARY 16th, 1874.

The news from Tonquin, which we reproduce to-day at length from the *Saigon Independent*, is both startling and important. It appears that the assassination of M. GARNIER, which, up to the present, was spoken of in the columns of that paper, as a merely lamentable accident, is of a totally different character, and has a most important political significance. The silence which has been preserved upon this subject is so striking that it is impossible to come to any other conclusion than that it was designed, and that an endeavour has been made to keep the world in ignorance of some very important political movements which have been going on. We are the more disposed to believe from the fact that long ago rumour, even in this Colony, pointed to the exact explanation of the matter which now for the first time appears in the *Saigon paper*. It was stated very generally that private telegrams had been received to the effect that the French had sustained a severe defeat in Tonquin, but, being unwilling to give credence to news of so unfortunate a character until we found it confirmed upon reliable authority, we looked to the *Saigon papers* for further intelligence—which we have only now received in any form not more misleading by what it withheld than instructive by what it set forth. It now appears, beyond question, that a political officer under the expedition at the head of which M. GARNIER was placed; and it seems to be admitted that the expedition had the concurrence of the Governor of Saigon, although this part of the subject is somewhat carefully shrouded. It seems strange, however, that there was no idea of such an attempt being made, that any troops should have been placed at his disposal; and it is curious to note that the *Saigon Independent* claims the results of the expedition as far as they were favourable as having been so much gained by us—that is the French nation generally, though the disasters are placed entirely to the credit of M. PHILIPPE, the successor of M. GARNIER. The simple explanation of the matter seems to be that there has been an endeavour to annex Tonquin, which has failed; and, as usual in such cases, an attempt is made by each concerned in the affair to throw the responsibility on to the other.

Without in any way entering upon the merits of the painful matter at present under investigation, arising from the foundering of the steamer *Wan Loong*, we think it is desirable to lose no time in calling attention to a defect in the Harbour regulations, which ought to be remedied without delay. It appears that there are no powers vested in the Harbour Master with reference to the smaller passenger craft, and that his authority to regulate matters connected with passenger traffic is confined to vessels sailing passengers for more than seven miles from the Colony. This is obviously a very serious omission. No doubt, it was excusable at the time the Harbour and Coast Ordinance was framed, as there did not then appear to be any special necessity for powers being conferred upon the Harbour Master, with regard to passenger vessels going upon short trips, for the very good reason that there were then no such vessels in the Colony; and there did not seem to be any likelihood of their coming into use. Matters, however, have now changed, and the regulations ought at once to be altered to meet a new state of affairs. There should be provisions by which some kind of responsible control should be held over all vessels designed to carry passengers in any numbers, and the sooner such a regulation be introduced the better.

At home, all craft which are used for the public conveyance of passengers are licensed to carry a certain number only, and are placed under proper supervision. A rule of the same kind ought unquestionably to be introduced with reference to the small craft carrying passengers in Hongkong, and especially with regard to the Yow-mah-tse steam ferry boats, which, under the existing order of things, are free from official control altogether. They can carry any number of passengers, and we are informed upon reliable authority, they often leave the jetty with their stores almost under water. This is a state of things which clearly ought not to be allowed to continue for a single day longer than can be helped, and with the warning now before them, we doubt not the Government will allow of no delay in remedying the existing state of affairs. These boats ought not to be under control as to the number of passengers which they carry, but they ought to be subject to careful inspection as to machinery, as they are high pressure boats, and an accident of a lamentable character might easily arise through neglect of the boilers, which, if left as they probably are in some cases, with salt water, will become in time corroded and liable to explode. The wisdom of entrusting boats for public conveyance of passengers merely to Chinese management may also be questioned. No doubt a certain number of Chinamen have learnt how to manage small engines, and may on the whole be trusted, but there is always a danger that Chinese engineers will, after a certain time, become in some degree fool-hardy, and neglect that care in the supply of water to the boiler, which should be observed when the man under whose control the small engine is, is in the position of being responsible for the lives of a large number of passengers.

We should certainly be the last to advocate that obstacles in the form of Government interference should be placed in the way of private enterprise, and would regret that a useful service should be put a stop to. But the Government has a special responsibility with regard to small steamers used for the conveyance of Chinese of the lower class, who are quite ignorant of the nature of the risk they run. To them a steamer is a steamer, and an engine an engine. They would trust their safety as readily to a small craft with a high pressure engine under the control of a Chinaman as to a first class steamer, with low pressure engines, and all the "safe-guards" which the experience of skilled foreign engineers can bring into play. The necessity for protecting them is, therefore, even greater than it would be at home, and the local regulations ought, at the very least, to be on a par with those in force in England, and in most civilized countries. All boats for carrying passengers ought to be licensed for a fixed number, and there should be regulations whereby it can be ascertained before they leave, that they do not carry more than the proper number. In addition to this there ought to be provisions to secure a periodical examination of machinery, and the employment of skilled and reliable engineers.

We believe this subject has already attracted the attention of men well qualified to judge with regard to it, and we doubt not that the matter must have been a subject of consideration with the harbour authorities. It is to be regretted that matters of this kind are placed too rigidly under Ordinance in Hongkong, and that sufficient room is not left to the Harbour-Master to make such regulations as may from time to time appear necessary, at all events provisionally. Had it been in his power to do so, we make little doubt that some steps would long ago have been taken by the Harbour-Master in regard to this subject. The mistake of endeavouring to regulate matters to the smallest detail by Ordinance is one which runs through the administration of this Colony in many directions; and which ought in all future Ordinances to be carefully guarded against. A certain amount of discretionary power may with propriety be left in the hands of the heads of departments, if they are competent men, and it is always wise to provide means of meeting any changes which may arise, and may call for special and immediate action.

The steamer *Patrolva* was to leave Singapore at noon yesterday for this port.

At the Lusitania Theatre, on Saturday evening, the Portuguese amateurs gave their third performance of the season. The house was, as usual, fairly filled. The comedy entitled "El Pecosado Yello," was performed with great spirit; and the "Reiner Ben am Quarto" was most successful. The last piece, which was a comedy, entitled "Maldito el Familia," was received by the audience with great applause; and at the conclusion of this the amateurs sang some songs, and returned their thanks to the audience for their appreciation and encouragement.

The steamer *Patrolva*, which arrived here from Macao, caught fire on Saturday night, and was burnt out of the water. The police boat, it was discovered that more assistance was required, and the *Princess Charlotte* was signalled with blue lights. Part of the crew of the *Patrolva* were rescued by her. When the police arrived, a barrel of tar was found over the fore hatch where the fire broke out. At a late hour the fire was spreading, and preparations were being made to save the vessel. The fire was extinguished, as there then appeared to be no hope of saving her.

An example of what the Chinese will do, to obtain money at this time of year, may be gleaned from the following facts:—At 6 a.m. yesterday, the barkeeper of the Liverpool Arms Tavern, Queen's Road, West, as he was lying in bed awake, and unable to come from below, and knowing that he was unwell, went down stairs and discovered that the smoke was coming from between the joints of the partition in the kitchen. He opened the door, but found he could not enter for the dense smoke. He then at once closed the door, and rushed upstairs again, and called the waiter, Mr. M. Fernandez, and told him of the smoke. The waiter went down stairs, and the smoke being thick, cleared away, and discovered that an incendiary had been in the kitchen, and had set fire to the partition. The waiter then went down stairs, and the smoke being thick, cleared away, and discovered that an incendiary had been in the kitchen, and had set fire to the partition. The waiter then went down stairs, and the smoke being thick, cleared away, and discovered that an incendiary had been in the kitchen, and had set fire to the partition.

The *Gazette* advises that the fee of one dollar to the collecting Minister for the registration of the *Wan Loong*, 707, 1888, and like fee to the Registrar-General for registering such a ship is reduced to ten cents in each case.

The average amount of bank notes in circulation in Hongkong during the month ending January 31st, 1874, was—
 Oriental Bank, £506,825
 Chartered Bank of India, £78,228
 London and China, £49,270
 Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation, £1,888,573
 \$3,881,894

We are glad to find that the owners of the small steamer *Wan Loong* have seen the necessity of at once lifting her up to be not only out of the track of steamers, but for the purpose of getting a new boiler. He was, however, several weeks late. We learn that Mr. McBain, the representative owner, was instructed by Mr. Dunn to have her up on Saturday, if possible, and four days later, on Monday, the 11th inst., she was taken to do so. Purchases were rigged, and chains got under her bottom, but on Saturday night they had only succeeded at low water to take a strain on them; when the fore one, as the tide rose, gave way, and the whole day's work was lost. Yesterday morning another attempt was made, but it was not until noon that the boiler was put on, and the whole day's work was lost. On Saturday afternoon, Mr. Stewart, the Canton wharfinger and stevedore, drove down to oblige a relative of one of the owners, but he was unable to enter the ship. He was, however, several days late. 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